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We this day commence the publication of a new and interesting novel, entitled, "*George Barnwell*," founded on the celebrated Tragedy of that name. As it is lengthy, and will occupy several "Deserts," our readers will be careful in preserving the numbers until it is completed, when they will be gratified by the possession of a work, calculated to interest the finest feelings of the heart; and, by holding up to view the danger attendant upon a deviation from the paths of rectitude, promote the true interests of Virtue and Religion.

GEORGE BARNWELL.

"Among the many and various errors to which youth and inexperience are exposed, there is none more fatal in its consequences, than the concealment of having committed them. The first deviating steps from the paths of rectitude, may often be traced by the aid of friendly counsel; but he who denies himself that timely aid, will in vain implore its efficacy when entangled in the maze of deception; and when every avenue to the return to happiness is obstructed by some unexpected obstacle."

THE eye that has witnessed the peaceful departure of a just man's spirit in the presence of affectionate relatives, and revering friends, has beheld a spectacle solemnly delightful, and awfully interesting, beyond all power of description.—On such occasions the heart trusts not to the tongue's feeble utterance, but rushing to the countenance, there delineates its emotion in a language without words. Such was the scene at the rectory of Hanworth: its worthy incumbent had heard with resignation, the opinion of his physician, that no human means could save him. Mortification had advanced almost to its last stage. Yet, though he felt no pangs of guilt nor dread of future worlds, though perfectly resigned to die, there were attractions, whose resistless force still held his wishes for a longer life—around that couch, from which he never was to rise, knelt objects that had awakened in his breast, the finest feelings of a husband, father, friend.

The amiable woman, who at an early age had given him her hand, and with it the worthiest of hearts, too deeply afflicted to weep, gazed alternately on her expiring husband, and on those, who were soon to be the orphan pledges of his love, with the soul-piercing wildness of despair.

Their son, a youth of sixteen, held his father's hand, clasped firmly betwixt both his own, and bent his face over it to conceal his

daughter, somewhat younger, with tears and falling sighs mingled ejaculations to the Deity to spare a life so dear.

Leaning his head against the feet-posts of the bed stood Dr. Hill, the benevolent friend and skilful physician of the Rector, whose serene countenance he appeared contemplating with pleasure.

"I could have wished he had arrived—I should have retired from the scenes of this life with less regret, had I committed these my only cares to his kind keeping," faintly uttered Mr. Barnwell. "But his own good heart," continued he, "will suggest to him all I could have said."

It was his brother to whom he alluded, who entered the room as he was speaking. His appearance changed the scene.—Mrs. Barnwell, Eliza and George, clung round his knees, and seemed to hail him as the messenger of joy; but it was a momentary joy. Sir James had been anxiously expected, and his arrival, as it ended that anxiety, occasioned a momentary impulse of pleasure. But no sooner did the melancholy cause of his visit recur, than silence and sorrow ensued.

Sir James, after a pause, approached his dying brother, and an affecting farewell took place. Tears rolled down the pale cheek of the worthy Rector, as he pressed his brother's hand, and cast a meaning look upon his family. He sunk exhausted upon his pillow.

"Think of this world no more, my brother," said Sir James: "from this moment this is my wife—these are my children—and all I have is their's!"

"My God! I thank thee," exclaimed the Rector—and expired.

When the first effusion of sorrow for the loss of friends is exhausted, and grief begins to listen to the voice of reason, there are certain arguments which custom, almost invariably, applies on such occasions; such as, that—"we must all die,"—that "our loss is their gain,"—that "sorrow is useless, and tears cannot restore them to us."

Sometimes it happens that Prudence steps kindly in with some such counsel as this—"that though a husband, or a father, is gone, it is a comfortable consideration that his widow or his children enjoy the fruits of his industry and economy; and that, instead of grieving for a calamity that is past, it were better to rejoice in the blessings that remain."

Such are the reflections that sooth the breasts of many an heir, and many a widow, beneath the pale shew of sorrow; who oft-times by their cheerful countenance, wisely endeavour to dissipate the gloom occasioned by the escutcheon that darkens the window of their ball-room, and the black equipage that conveys them to the opera.—

"Thus hear about the mockery of woe
To midnight dances and the public show"

The family of the Barnwells, inheriting from the Rector little else than his good name, were in no danger of insulting his memory by a joyful display of his wealth; nor would their grief have been lessened by the possession of thousands. Every branch of this bereaved family was sensible of the loss it had sustained, and felt, when the violence of grief was abated, a regret more calm indeed, but not less sorrowful.

Sir James was, perhaps, the individual among them who, possessing the least sensibility, was the least affected: not that the knight was deficient in those feelings which are the honorable appendages of humanity, but he was older than Mrs. Barnwell by at least ten years, and had spent the greater part of his life in a counting-house, and on the Royal Exchange; which, though certainly the schools where industry may learn an honorable way to its rewards, cannot be deemed the most favorable soil for the growth of those sensibilities which, though not virtues themselves, are at least Virtue's faithful allies.

Sir James was the first, therefore, to call the attention of his sister-in-law from the tomb which held her affections, to those duties which she owed to society, to her children, to herself.

"I am a lone man," said the knight, "and, by the blessing of heaven upon honest endeavours, have accumulated more than I shall ever spend. My brother, I know, accumulated in another way—his stock was the treasure of the mind—a proper possession, doubtless, for a clergyman, but for which his heirs are little or nothing the better."

"After the loss you have sustained, my sister," continued the knight, "I am sure your inclination is to quit this place as soon as possible. I insist on a visit to my old mansion, where we may leisurely discuss the plan I have in contemplation to make us all happy."

A proposal so perfectly congenial to her wishes was readily accepted by Mrs. Barnwell, and a day was named for their departure; but whilst herself and Eliza impatiently desired that day's arrival, George deprecated its approach. To quit for ever his native home—cost his young heart—which was the shrine of sensibility—some struggles. Among the various objects that called reflection to its pleasing, painful task, there stood in the centre of the garden a small temple, built in the gothic style, and dedicated to retirement. This was constructed under the direction of George himself, and was the favourite retreat of the Rector. To this place young Barnwell would frequently retire, where memory would rehearse to him those lessons, to which he had often listened with reverent attention—and, aided by fancy, would place his father's countenance and form before him.—As he strolled round the grounds, in one place a plant, in another some little monument with

classical questions, would remind him of the pleasing employment of his past hours.

"Days of happiness!—hours of hope!—farewell!" exclaimed the youth: "and you, sweet home, where first the light of heaven beamed upon these eyes, farewell! Oh, you have cheated me, false Hope! How often has my fainting father, too, added false prophecies to thy delusive tales! How often has he said, 'When I am gone, my George, this plant will speak to you of me—this tablet shall remind my son—that he must also die!' and now, alas! some stranger's eye shall gaze indifferent upon these plants—some fool, perhaps, shall scoff at wisdom's lesson—while those for whom they were designed, like the wanderers from Paradise, are driven to explore an unknown world!"

Such really were the reflections of a youth of sixteen, incredible as they may appear to those who judge of human nature, and its faculties, by the same calculations as a surveyor values timber, its size and growth. Such persons would deny the existence of Chatterton.

Adjoining the seat of Sir James stood the remains of one of those cemeteries for the living, called monasteries.—These moulding and moist-covered relics afforded a more grand *coup d'œil*, from his park, than can be imagined by those whose contemplations have been confined to the modern ruins, with which it is fashionable to decorate the grounds of modern villas.

One of the aisles of the chapel still remained in its original state, and afforded conversation matter for all the lovers of romance in the country. Spectres of all sizes and shapes, of either sex, had been seen, by moonlight or torchlight, at different times, playing most singular antics in the old abbey chapel. At one time it was a nun, at another a monk; and now assumed the terrific appearance of the fallen angel; and now danced along the aisle, in form most beautiful, to notes of most musical air.

Among other subjects which engrossed the attention of the company at the knight's table, a few days after his return from the rectory, the haunted aisle became a topic of conversation.

"Well, I don't know," said Sir James; "such things may be—spirits may walk. For my own part, I would neither obstinately deny all belief in stories of this kind, nor would I implicitly believe all I hear. What thinks my nephew George? he smiles as if he would convey a sort of contempt for things of this nature."

George blushed deeply. He had not been accustomed to speak in so large and respectable a company as the knight's hospitality had assembled, and felt considerable embarrassment in so new a situation. He recovered himself, and, with some hesitation, said, "I confess, Sir, I have been taught to consider stories of this description as ridiculous."

"Ridiculous!" exclaimed Mr. Sandall, the chaplain—"ridiculous! young gentleman; and wherefore, let me ask, ridiculous?"

"Because, being irreconcilable to truth and nature, they are beneath the dignity of serious argument."

"It must be confessed, Mr. Sandall," said the knight, "that these appearances are supernatural."

"Allow me to remark, Sir James," obsequiously said Mr. Sandall, "that is no proof of

their non-existence; besides, with all deference, I would ask how we, whose ideas are so finite, can pretend to limit the operations of the author of nature?"

And then raising his voice triumphantly, and fixing his small sharp eyes on Barnwell—"I believe, young gentleman," interrupted he, "if you had seen the appearances these eyes have witnessed, at the abbey, your courage would have fled with your incredulity."

George only bowed.

A Miss Lucas, a neighbouring maiden lady of fortune, could not suffer so charming a subject as ghosts to be dropped so easily.

"Surely, Sir," said this lady to Barnwell, "you cannot presume to put your opinion in competition with such high authorities as Drelincourt on Death, and Dr. Johnson. You will allow I hope; there are ghosts, though it may not have been your privilege to have seen them."

"Without incurring the charge of vanity, I apprehend," said Barnwell, "that I may hold an opinion even against the greatest authorities; for you will allow that judgment should yield to argument, not names. I have never beheld a spectre myself, and I am inclined to attribute the narratives of those, who say they have, to the influence of a weak or warm imagination acted upon by accidental circumstances."

"It's rather singular, then," said Mr. Sandall, "that the greater part of mankind should have remained so long in error: for I conceive a majority believe in apparitions."

"There cannot be a doubt of that, Mr. Sandall," said Miss Lucas. "This is termed an enlightened age; and pray, does not the popular opinion sanction, almost exclusively, a novel, a romance, or a drama, where the prominent character is a ghost, or a daemon?"

"And yet," replied Barnwell, "I cannot bring myself to consider even this universal patronage as the consequence of a general belief in spectres; unless it could be first proved, that the mass of mankind are most delighted with known truths: whereas, I consider the chief source of the pleasure in reading or seeing such unnatural productions, is, their remote distance from probability; which, creating a monstrous novelty; excites the attention of those, whose sole aim is amusement."

"Pray Sir," said Miss Lucas, "have you among other things been taught a knowledge of the holy scriptures?"

"My father, Madam, was a clergyman," said George, with a degree of warmth; "and I was intended for the same holy office," added he, with an emphatic sigh.

"Then, pray," said Miss Lucas, without feeling the rebuke, "do you believe the story of the Witch of Endor?"

"Pardon me," interrupted Sir James; "but it is a custom I have established at my own table these thirty years, never to permit the discussion of religious or political subjects over the bottle. I beg leave, therefore, to propose a walk."

Why is curiosity most easily raised, or why most unquietly rest, in the female breast?

Eliza, whose modesty did not permit her to trouble the company with her observations, yet treasured in her memory all that had been said concerning the abbey.

When she retired to her chamber, the windows of which commanded a view of the ruins,

she questioned the servant who attended her concerning the story of the haunted aisle. The incongruous narrative of Hannah served only to increase her curiosity, and she determined to pay a visit to the abbey the following morning before breakfast.

Sleep did not conquer the senses of Eliza, that evening, with its usual ease. She had extinguished her candle, had whispered a prayer from the heart, and sought repose. A slight slumber brought with it the following dream—

She had reached the abbey ruins, and was just entering the haunted aisle, when a tomb which stood at the entrance seemed to rock at her approach. Whilst hesitating whether to retire or advance, the tomb became enveloped in an ascending vapour. In a moment the abbey ruins echoed the groans of one in the agonies of death; and as the vapour dispersed, there appeared kneeling on the tomb a most beautiful female, naked to the waste. Her eyes were swollen with weeping, her hair was dishevelled, and from her wounded breast blood trickled, whilst her hands in vain attempted to remove a dagger, whose fatal point was buried in her bosom. Eliza's attention to this spectre was so intense, that she did not notice the form of a man who stood contemplating with smiles the agonies of the female, until the sound of a harp, which he touched in a rapid manner, aroused her. His figure was handsome, his complexion a dark brown, and jet-black hair curled in ringlets on his forehead: his voice which accompanied the harp, was melodious. Listening to his lively strain, Eliza was smote with horror and astonishment at the following rhapsody—

Flow softly—gently—vital stream;
Ye crimson life drops, stay;
Indulge me with this pleasing dream,
Thro' an eternal day.

See—see—my soul, her agony!
See how her eye-balls glare!
Those snicks, delightful harmony,
Proclaim her deep despair.

Rise—rise—infernal spirits, rise,
Swift dart across her brain:
Thou, horror, with blood chilling cries,
Lead on thy hedious train.

O' feast my soul—revenge is sweet:
Louisa, take my scorn;—
Curs'd was the hour that saw us meet,
The hour when we were born!

Scarcely was the last stanza sung, when trembling Eliza woke from her dream; doubting for a considerable time, whether what she had seen or heard was not reality. Just as she was overcome the impressions arising from so horrible a vision, the night wind wafted by the casement of her chamber the tone of an instrument similar to those she had heard in fancy, she starting up in her bed, she drew aside the curtain under an apprehension of beholding a waking vision of her sleep.

The chamber was in total darkness; but the same sounds were repeated; and hearing them now more distinctly, her heart sank at the certainty. She determined

"Bade him to INDIA'S shores retire,
And there for me more wealth procure.

Now join'd with love, inspired by dear

SIXTEEN

The page of pure Nature her vot'ry shall read

bed, and feeling her way to the window opened it. The same sounds were heard again, yet more distinctly, and she was convinced they came from the abbey ruins. She bent her eyes towards the spot whence they issued: in a few moments all was silence, and she beheld a lighted torch borne along the ruins, but the night was too dark to discern the person that carried it.

Returning to her bed, terrified and astonished, she began to reason with her fears. That the music was not imaginary she was convinced; and that its influence, added to the impression of Hannah's incoherent narrative, which bore a resemblance to her dream, had occasioned the vision, she no longer doubted: yet not less strange appeared the reality than the vision. For what purpose any one could ramble among the mouldering tombs of the abbey, she had yet to learn. Fear, at length, gradually retired from her breast; but its most constant companion curiosity remained.

"There is a very singular coincidence of your dream with the music you really heard," said George to his sister, who had unburdened her mind to him, according to her usual practice. "Do you remember enough of the place you supposed was the abbey, to compare what you saw in your dream with the ruins themselves?"

"Beyond a doubt," said Eliza.

"We will take a ramble there in the evening," replied George; "and should there be a tomb in the old aisle resembling that in your dream, I think we should relate the whole to Sir James. Murder," added he, "is a crime, above all others, offensive to the Deity; and if ever in our days the Omnipotent displays a miracle, I can conceive nothing more likely to occasion his supernatural interference than detection of so foul a crime."

They separated. At dinner they joined a numerous circle of the neighbouring gentry. It was the custom of Sir James, once a year, to invite them all without exception. At other times he indulged his pleasure in a selection. On this occasion he relinquished his prejudices, and though himself a whig of the old school, and a high-church-man, there were at his table individuals of as various a cast, as a circuit of ten miles round contained.

Among these visitors, there was one most opposite to the worthy knight in his principles and his manners, and whose residence was contiguous to Sir James's.

By the opposite to a whig, used to be formerly understood a tory; and by the opposite to high-church, low-church was suggested. Now Mr. Mental was neither whig nor tory, nor a high, nor low-church-man; yet were his principles more at variance with Sir James than a Jacobite presbyter's: the latter only differed with the knight as to the person of a king and the modes of religion. Mr. Mental was supposed to be equally averse to all kings, and to all religion.

As his figure and dress were the most singular imaginable, they rendered him conspicuous in all companies. He was of a large make, but thin; his face pale; his hair a coal black, crested short in the neck; his dress, always the same, a suit of plain brown cloth. He would eat nothing that had ever enjoyed fire, nothing in which sugar was an ingredient, and his drink

was water. He never smiled; and the only pleasure he ever appeared to enjoy, was the triumph of argument. To obtain this pleasure, he would constantly controvert the most allowed truths; delighted in attacking revelation, and was indefatigable in discovering the scruples of his hearers on religious points.

The irremediable evils of society were his dearest topics, and the climax of his felicity was, by the abuse of the eloquence he possessed, to render discontent triumphant.

He had resided in the neighbourhood many years, but saw no company at his own house, and very rarely accepted an invitation to any other: whenever he did, it was his invariable custom to single out one from the younger part of a company, with whom he would abruptly begin a conversation.

George and a young baronet of one and twenty, were engaged in some trifling discourse, when Mr. Mental tapped the latter on the shoulder, and asked him, if he had read a celebrated novel much talked of.

"I never read novels," said the baronet.

"Why not?" asked Mr. Mental.

"It is throwing away one's time, to say the best," replied the baronet. "I make a point never to read any thing of that sort. I never read a novel in my life, and never will; they're well enough for girls."

"Prejudice,—Prejudice,—Prejudice,—how art thou worshiped in this isle!" exclaimed Mr. Mental. "I suppose, then, you plunge a pretty good depth in literature of a more abstruse or erudite nature," continued he. "Have you looked into the Political Justice?"

"I make a point never to read works of that description; I understand its object is to turn every thing topsy-turvy; and I feel no sort of inclination to be made giddy. I leave this sort of thing to your revolutionists."

"Prejudice again," cried Mental. "Perhaps, then, you dive into the mines of science. You read—"

"Oh, no, believe me, not I. I was obliged to do something in that way at Pembroke. But I've done with lectures completely; and, to own the truth, the only science I care about now, is, to make an estate of ten thousand a year bring me happiness in the way I like it."

"I crave your pardon then," said Mr. Mental. "Had I known you were in the possession of ten thousand a year, I should by no means have suspected you guilty of possessing a mind."

"Is there no prejudice in that observation, Sir?" said Barnwell, with a smile of modest diffidence.

Mr. Mental, instead of answering, fixed a pair of large black eyes on George; and folding his arms upon his breast, examined every feature of his countenance. After a considerable pause—

"You, I believe, do not possess ten thousand a year," cried he; "but if I am not much indeed, deceived, you have materials of which a skillful artist might form a great mind. Allow me to ask you—have you a father?"

George gave an expressive look.

"He has left you!—did I know him—was he of these parts?"

George satisfied his curiosity.

Unfortunately—unfortunate, indeed!" continued Mental, "that such materials should have

fallen into such hands. You of course endeavour to compel your reason to adopt all those doctrines which priestcraft teaches."

"Sir," replied Barnwell, with the glow of indignation on his cheeks, "the honoured person to whom, without knowing him, you apply a common-place epithet, never strove to inspire a sentiment in the breast of his children, to which the most enlightened reason could object."

"You rejoice me," cried Mental—"You have not then imbibed the jargon of superstition, called religion."

"Superstition and religion in your dictionary, then, are synonymous terms," cried Barnwell.

"In the dictionary of truth they are so," replied Mental. "What is religion—but ceremony, or a set of ceremonies;—what are ceremonies, but superstition! for instance; how absurd, how degrading to a human being, with faculties so comprehensive that all nature bows before him, to which she unfolds her secrets and submits her laws—I say then it must be beneath the dignity of such a creature to bend his knees, to bow his head, and mumble syllables of absurdities strung together centuries ago, when, by the exercise of his own powers, he might be introduced into the arcana of great Nature herself."

George replied—"The dignity of human nature, Sir, is no new subject to me. My father taught it me truly, and exemplified his doctrines by his conduct. He taught me, Sir, that the dignity of our nature cannot be degraded by a public acknowledgment of our obligations to the Author of nature, according to the customs and manners of our country; and it is better to sanction by example, even prejudices, which cannot be momentarily, and safely removed, than by ridiculing those institutions, which the mass of our fellow citizens hold sacred, to give the reins to uncultivated nature."

"There is a vein of independence in your reasoning I admire extremely, however much we may deviate in our conclusions," said Mental.

This introduction led to a long conversation, in which each seemed to take an interest. Mental appeared less and less disgusting in the eyes of George, and George delighted old Mental, who expressed a wish this would not be the last of their conversations.

"You are an inmate of Sir James's, I presume," said he.

"For the present," said Barnwell;—"but in a week or two I shall quit this place for London."

"For London!" cried Mental. "What takes you that focus of corruption and folly?"

"My uncle has most generously entered into a treaty with a merchant there, a share of whose concern is to become mine, after the usual initiation."

"A merchant!" exclaimed Mental—"Can you confine your capacities then to the boundaries of a counting-house ledger—and condemn

* Some readers may deem it an imperinent interruption, if not an impeachment of their understandings, to be reminded that the sentiments which are put into the mouths of various personages in a novel, are for the illustrations of their various characters, and ought never to be viewed in any other light. But the author would rather incur the blame of an unnecessary interpolation, than suffer the possibility of a supposition that it was his wish to disseminate principles, which it is his aim to destroy.

your noble faculties to calculations of courses of exchange? Have you thought what you are about?"

"I believe I have thought too much about it," replied George. "To speak candidly, I have been at no small pains to make a match betwixt duty and inclination; but the latter receives the address of the former, even yet, but coolly."

"Mr. Barnwell," said Mental earnestly, "as you value your happiness for life, reflect—now is that important moment, in the period of your existence, that will gild with pleasure, or darken with discontent, every scene as yet behind the veil of time. I feel a lively interest in your welfare; and if you can trust yourself with me for an hour, to-morrow, I will venture to say you will not regret it."

A summer day drew towards its close—carriage after carriage had rolled away the well-pleased guests of the worthy knight, and silence once more reigned at the temple of hospitality.

While Eliza, with a palpitating heart, accompanied her brother to the haunted aisle, the impressions of terror revived in her breast as they entered the avenue from the park, which led directly to the ruins.—They were at the entrance of the aisle—Eliza trembled—

"Stay," said George; "it is dark, and we are far from the house. A thought strikes me—I have little dread of ghosts—but it is not impossible that this retreat may be the rendezvous of beings less merciful, and more powerful, than mere spectres. Were we to be attacked, our loudest cries would reach no friendly ear. Do you wait a moment behind this old column, and listen attentively. I will go on. Should there be danger, you will hear my cries (they shall be loud enough,) and immediately run as fast as possible towards the house—it's a straight road, and you cannot miss it."

When George had resolved on any purpose, he always adhered to it. Remonstrance on the score of his personal danger was in vain, and the anxious Eliza clung round the pillar in trembling expectation. A few minutes elapsed—Eliza grew impatient. A few minutes more passed away—no noise was heard—no brother returned. The whole space of time was less ten minutes—but how much longer it appeared in the reckoning of suspense, is easily conceived.

At length she heard the distant sound of footsteps;—it approached nearer;—she left her retreat, thinking to meet her brother; when a form, muffled in a long black cloak, and masked, met her at the entrance of the aisle. She screamed, in an instant George was at her elbow; but the cause of her alarm was vanished.

"Surely I cannot be deceived?" said George. "Twas certainly a man—I saw him most distinctly. A black cloak and a mask were lying on the very tomb you have described. As I approached it, a man, who was kneeling near it, started up, hurried on the cloak and mask, and, presenting a pistol, spoke these remarkable words, 'I am discovered!' Ere I had recovered from my surprize he vanished."

"For heaven's sake, my dear brother, let us quit this situation: it may be the abode of murderers," said Eliza.

They walked swiftly towards the house—

"There are so many singular circumstances combined in this adventure," said George, "that I am determined to relate the whole affair to Sir James."

It was late when they reached home; the family were assembled at supper, and the looks of Eliza answered the purpose of a preface to George's narrative.

"Now, young gentleman," said Mr. Sandall, triumphantly, "I suppose you concede a little of your scepticism against apparitions."

"Not a scruple," said George.

"What! you will allow nothing supernatural in the dream of Miss Barnwell—nothing supernatural in the description she gives of the tomb she never beheld?"

"True," said George, "she never beheld this tomb; but Hannah has seen it, and in describing it to my sister, so impressed the image on her mind, that it is impossible to doubt the origin of her dream."

"Did Hannah, too, impress her mind with the poem she so well remembered?"

"Hannah told me a confused story, something similar in its circumstances to those in my dream," said Eliza.

"I have heard," said Sir James, "stories of this nature frequently repeated; but, till now, I own, I never paid a serious attention to them. What has happened, however, determines me to take some active measures towards unravelling the apparent mystery. In the morning I will myself see the place, and examine its appearances."

In the morning the knight, with a numerous train of attendants, sallied forth to survey the haunted aisle. He was supported on his right hand by the superstitious Mr. Sandall, on his left by Barnwell. A few armed domestics preceded them—Arrived at the entrance of the aisle, Mr. Sandall paused.

"If I might advise," said he, "the servants I conceive, should first search the place, for they are armed."

"But what are arms against incorporeal substances, Mr. Sandall?" said George. "Besides we can take the arms which the servants carry, who may wait here, and be within call, if their assistance is wanted."

"Foolish scheme enough!" said Sandall, terrified in no small degree.

"Suppose," continued George, "some demon really tenants the old tomb, what do the servants know of exercising? Come Sir, let us enter. I'll take this musket, and if the inhabitants are formed of tangible stuff, a bullet may be useful, in case of attack: on the other hand, should they be spiritual residents, I shall turn them over to the discipline of the church."

"Not so much levity," said Sir James. "I apprehend no danger; but there's no telling—so go on, Joseph, we'll proceed as we set out."

Some minutes passed in the most profound silence. Nothing was heard, nothing was seen, that could justify the most distant conjecture. George could hardly refrain smiling, and in his heart exclaimed—"I would this solemn mockery were ended;" but his uncle's reproof was yet recent. At length—

"Are you sure you saw upon this tomb—this very tomb, a mask and cloak?" said Sir James: "that you also saw a man kneel near this tomb,

saw him rise—put on the mask and cloak—Are you perfectly convinced no part of this was imagination?"

"I am sure I saw all that you have stated."

"'Tis very strange!" said Sir James.

"Very strange!" said every one—

"Could not this tomb be moved?" said George. "Were we in the forests of Germany, I should be induced to think, from circumstances, that it covers the trap door of some subterraneous cavern."

"Aye, Sir," said Joseph, an old domestic of the knights, "you have hit the right nail on its head now. To be sure it's no business of mine; but if I was a magistrate—"

"Hold your tongue, Joseph—What would you do, if you were a magistrate?" said the knight in a breath.

"Why, might I be bold enough to speak the truth, I do think murder lies hid under this here monument; and if I was a magistrate, it should be all pulled down, and dug under; and my life on it, but murder lies at the bottom."

"That can't be done without the consent of the owner," said Sir James, "or some better grounds of suspicion than we have at present."

"Do you not own the ruins, Sir?" said George.

"Not this part of them," said the knight. "all the land on this side the row of alder trees belongs to the next estate."

"And who owns that?" asked George.

"Mr. Mental, the cynic you saw yesterday. What do you start at?"

"Nothing, Sir," replied George, hesitating. "but—Mr. Mental—is—a strange man."

"Ah, God forgive him, if all they say be true," cried old Joseph, with an expressive shake of the head.

"God can't forgive him," cried Sandall. "he's an atheist."

"He is a singular man, undoubtedly," said Sir James; "and people will talk. Nobody, it seems, knows who or what he is, or where he came from. But I have heard old men, who remember his first coming here, whisper strange stories."

George was ruminating. After another fruitless search they returned home.

A variety of conjectures presented themselves to the fertile imagination of George, all pointing to Mr. Mental. He now conceived, that the man he had seen the preceding evening was Mr. Mental. He imagined the voice he had heard resembled Mr. Mental's, and built upon these impressions a suspicion to the disadvantage of his character. Quickly again his heart rebuked him for so illiberal a conclusion from a train of mere accidents. He recollected his invitation, and resolved immediately to visit him. Unwilling to awake those suspicions in the breast of another, which he was himself ashamed of cherishing, he determined to keep his visit a secret to the family: and merely observed, that as he wished to take a long stroll, it was doubtful if he should return before evening.

[To be continued.]

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